wartime hazards, or preventive medicines or vaccines associated with Gulf War service; and

(2) any services or benefits available with respect to such health risks.

SEC. 106. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) The term ''toxic agent, environmental or wartime hazard, or preventive medicine or vaccine associated with Gulf War service'' means a biological, chemical, or other toxic agent, environmental or wartime hazard, or preventive medicine or vaccine that is known or presumed to be associated with service in the Armed Forces in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War, whether such association arises as a result of single, repeated, or sustained exposure and whether such association arises through exposure singularly or in combination.

(2) The term ''designated congressional committees'' means the following:

(A) The Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services of the Senate.

(B) The Committees on Veterans' Affairs and National Security of the House of Representatives.

(3) The term ''Persian Gulf War'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(33) of title 38, United States Code.

TITLE II—EXTENSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF PERSIAN GULF WAR HEALTH CARE AUTHORITIES

SEC. 201. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE FOR PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS.

Section 1710(e)(3)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking out ''December 31, 1998'' and inserting in lieu thereof ''December 31, 2001''.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF EVALUATION OF HEALTH STATUS OF SPOUSES AND CHILDREN OF PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS.

(a) EXTENSION.—Subsection (b) of section 107 of the Persian Gulf War Veterans' Benefits Act (title I of Public Law 103–446; 38 U.S.C. 1117 note) is amended by striking out ''ending on December 31, 1998.'' and inserting in lieu thereof ''ending on the earlier of—

''(1) the date of the completion of expenditure of funds available for the program under subsection (c); or

''(2) December 31, 2001.''.

(b) TERMINATION OF CERTAIN TESTING AND EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS.—Subsection (a) of that section is amended by striking out the flush matter following paragraph (3).

(c) OUTREACH.—Subsection (g) of that section is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''The Secretary'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) of paragraph (1), as designated by paragraph (1) of this subsection, as subparagraphs (A) and (B) of that paragraph; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(2) In addition to the outreach activities under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall also provide outreach with respect to the following:

''(A) The existence of the program under this section.

''(B) The purpose of the program.

''(C) The availability under the program of medical examinations and tests, and not medical treatment.

''(D) The findings of any published, peer-reviewed research with respect to any associations (or lack thereof) between the service of veterans in the Southwest Asia theater of operations and particular illnesses or disorders of their spouses or children.

''(3) Outreach under this subsection shall be provided any veteran who served as a member of the Armed Forces in the Southwest Asia theater of operations and who—

''(A) seeks health care or services at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs; or

''(B) is or seeks to be listed in the Persian Gulf War Veterans Registry.''.

(d) ENHANCED FLEXIBILITY IN EXAMINATIONS.—That section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) and (j) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

''(i) ENHANCED FLEXIBILITY IN EXAMINATIONS.—In order to increase the number of diagnostic tests and medical examinations under the program under this section, the Secretary may—

''(1) reimburse the primary physicians of spouses and children covered by that subsection for the costs of conducting such tests or examinations, with such rates of reimbursement not to exceed the rates paid contract entities under subsection (d) for conducting tests or examinations under the program;

''(2) conduct such tests or examinations of spouses covered by that subsection in medical facilities of the Department; and

''(3) in the event travel is required in order to facilitate such tests or examinations by contract entities referred to in paragraph (1), reimburse the spouses and children concerned for the costs of such travel and of related lodging.''.

(e) ENHANCED MONITORING OF PROGRAM.—That section is further amended by inserting after subsection (i), as amended by subsection (d) of this section, the following new subsection (j):

''(j) ENHANCED MONITORING OF PROGRAM.—In order to enhance monitoring of the program under this section, the Secretary shall provide for monthly reports to the Central Office of the Department on activities with respect to the program by elements of the Department and contract entities under subsection (d).''.

TITLE III—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 301. ASSESSMENT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT ENTITY TO EVALUATE POST-CONFLICT ILLNESSES AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDED BY DOD AND VA BEFORE AND AFTER DEPLOYMENT OF SUCH MEMBERS.

(a) AGREEMENT FOR ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into an agreement with the National Academy of Sciences, or other appropriate independent organization, under which agreement the Academy shall carry out the assessment referred to in subsection (b).

(b) ASSESSMENT.—(1) Under the agreement, the Academy shall assess the need for and feasibility of establishing an independent entity to—

(A) evaluate and monitor interagency coordination on issues relating to the post-deployment health concerns of members of the Armed Forces, including coordination relating to outreach and risk communication, recordkeeping, research, utilization of new technologies, international cooperation and research, health surveillance, and other health-related activities;

(B) evaluate the health care (including preventive care and responsive care) provided to members of the Armed Forces both before and after their deployment on military operations;

(C) monitor and direct government efforts to evaluate the health of members of the Armed Forces upon their return from deployment on military operations for purposes of ensuring the rapid identification of any trends in diseases or injuries among such members as a result of such operations;

(D) provide and direct the provision of ongoing training of health care personnel of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs in the evaluation and treatment of post-deployment diseases and health conditions, including nonspecific and unexplained illnesses; and

(E) make recommendations to the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding improvements in the provision of health care referred to in subparagraph (B), including improvements in the monitoring and treatment of members referred to in that subparagraph.

(2) The assessment shall cover the health care provided by the Department of Defense and, where applicable, by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) REPORT.—(1) The agreement shall require the Academy to submit to the committees referred to in paragraph (3) a report on the results of the assessment under this section not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) The report shall include the following:

(A) The recommendation of the Academy as to the need for and feasibility of establishing an independent entity as described in subsection (b) and a justification of such recommendation.

(B) If the Academy recommends that an entity be established, the recommendations of the Academy as to—

(i) the organizational placement of the entity;

(ii) the personnel and other resources to be allocated to the entity;

(iii) the scope and nature of the activities and responsibilities of the entity; and

(iv) mechanisms for ensuring that any recommendations of the entity are carried out by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) The report shall be submitted to the following:

(A) The Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

(B) The Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on National Security of the House of Representatives.

The title was amended so as to read:

A bill to provide for the establishment of a presumption of service-connection for illnesses associated with service in the Persian Gulf War, to extend and enhance certain health care authorities relating to such service, and for other purposes.

NEXT GENERATION INTERNET RESEARCH ACT OF 1998

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3332, and the Senate then proceeded to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1999 and 2000 for the Next Generation Internet program, to require the Advisory Committee on High-Performance Computing and Communications, Information Technology, and the Next Generation Internet to monitor and give advice concerning the development and implementation of the Next Generation Internet program and report to the President and the Congress on its activities, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill appear at this point in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3332) was read the third time, and passed.

FEDERAL RESEARCH INVESTMENT ACT

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of calendar No. 697, S. 2217.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2217) to provide for continuation of the Federal research investment in a fiscally sustainable way, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Research Investment Act''.

SEC. 2. GENERAL FINDINGS REGARDING FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH.

(a) VALUE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—The Congress makes the following findings with respect to the value of research and development to the United States:

(1) Federal investment in research has resulted in the development of technology that saved lives in the United States and around the world.

(2) Research and development investment across all Federal agencies has been effective in creating technology that has enhanced the American quality of life.

(3) The Federal investment in research and development conducted or underwritten by both military and civilian agencies has produced benefits that have been felt in both the private and public sector.

(4) Discoveries across the spectrum of scientific inquiry have the potential to raise the standard of living and the quality of life for all Americans.

(5) Science, engineering, and technology play a critical role in shaping the modern world.

(6) Studies show that about half of all United States post-World War II economic growth is a direct result of technical innovation; and science, engineering, and technology contribute to the creation of new goods and services, new jobs and new capital.

(7) Technical innovation is the principal driving force behind the long-term economic growth and increased standards of living of the world's modern industrial societies. Other nations are well aware of the pivotal role of science, engineering, and technology, and they are seeking to exploit it wherever possible to advance their own global competitiveness.

(8) Federal programs for investment in research, which lead to technological innovation and result in economic growth, should be structured to address current funding disparities and develop enhanced capability in States and regions that currently underparticipate in the national science and technology enterprise.

(b) STATUS OF THE FEDERAL INVESTMENT.—The Congress makes the following findings with respect to the status of the Federal Investment in research and development activities:

(1) Federal investment of approximately 13 to 14 percent of the Federal discretionary budget in research and development over the past 11 years has resulted in a doubling of the nominal amount of Federal funding.

(2) Fiscal realities now challenge Congress to steer the Federal government's role in science, engineering, and technology in a manner that ensures a prudent use of limited public resources. There is both a long-term problem—addressing the ever-increasing level of mandatory spending—and a near-term challenge—apportioning a dwindling amount of discretionary funding to an increasing range of targets in science, engineering, and technology. This confluence of increased national dependency on technology, increased targets of opportunity, and decreased fiscal flexibility has created a problem of national urgency. Many indicators show that more funding for science, engineering, and technology is needed but, even with increased funding, priorities must be established among different programs. The United States cannot afford the luxury of fully funding all deserving programs.

(3) Current projections of Federal research funding show a downward trend.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS REGARDING THE LINK BETWEEN THE RESEARCH PROCESS AND USEFUL TECHNOLOGY.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) FLOW OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND TECHNOLOGY.—The process of science, engineering, and technology involves many steps. The present Federal science, engineering, and technology structure reinforces the increasingly artificial distinctions between basic and applied activities. The result too often is a set of discrete programs that each support a narrow phase of research or development and are not coordinated with one another. The government should maximize its investment by encouraging the progression of science, engineering, and technology from the earliest stages of research up to a precommercialization stage, through funding agencies and vehicles appropriate for each stage. This creates a flow of technology, subject to merit review at each stage, so that promising technology is not lost in a bureaucratic maze.

(2) EXCELLENCE IN THE AMERICAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE.—Federal investment in science, engineering, and technology programs must foster a close relationship between research and education. Investment in research at the university level creates more than simply world-class research. It creates world-class researchers as well. The Federal strategy must continue to reflect this commitment to a strong geographically-diverse research infrastructure. Furthermore, the United States must find ways to extend the excellence of its university system to primary and secondary educational institutions and to better utilize the community college system to prepare many students for vocational opportunities in an increasingly technical workplace.

(3) COMMITMENT TO A BROAD RANGE OF RESEARCH INITIATIVES.—An increasingly common theme in many recent technical breakthroughs has been the importance of revolutionary innovations that were sparked by overlapping of research disciplines. The United States must continue to encourage this trend by providing and encouraging opportunities for interdisciplinary projects that foster collaboration among fields of research.

(4) PARTNERSHIPS AMONG INDUSTRY, UNIVERSITIES, AND FEDERAL LABORATORIES.—Each of these contributors to the national science and technology delivery system has special talents and abilities that complement the others. In addition, each has a central mission that must provide their focus and each has limited resources. The nation's investment in science, engineering, and technology can be optimized by seeking opportunities for leveraging the resources and talents of these three major players through partnerships that do not distort the missions of each partner. For that reason, Federal dollars are wisely spent forming such partnerships.

SEC. 4. MAINTENANCE OF FEDERAL RESEARCH EFFORT; GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

(a) MAINTAINING UNITED STATES LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND TECHNOLOGY.—It is imperative for the United States to nurture its superb resources in science, engineering, and technology carefully in order to maintain its own globally competitive position.

(b) GUIDING PRINCIPLES.—Federal research and development programs should be conducted in accordance with the following guiding principles:

(1) GOOD SCIENCE.—Federal science, engineering, and technology programs include both knowledge-driven science together with its applications, and mission-driven, science-based requirements. In general, both types of programs must be focused, peer- and merit-reviewed, and not unnecessarily duplicative, although the details of these attributes must vary with different program objectives.

(2) FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY.—The Congress must exercise oversight to ensure that programs funded with scarce Federal dollars are well managed. The United States cannot tolerate waste of money through inefficient management techniques, whether by government agencies, by contractors, or by Congress itself. Fiscal resources would be better utilized if program and project funding levels were predictable across several years to enable better project planning; a benefit of such predictability would be that agencies and Congress can better exercise oversight responsibilities through comparisons of a project's and program's progress against carefully planned milestones.

(3) PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.—The United States needs to make sure that government programs achieve their goals. As the Congress crafts science, engineering, and technology legislation, it must include a process for gauging program effectiveness, selecting criteria based on sound scientific judgment and avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy. The Congress should also avoid the trap of measuring the effectiveness of a broad science, engineering, and technology program by passing judgment on individual projects. Lastly, the Congress must recognize that a negative result in a well-conceived and executed project or program may still be critically important to the funding agency.

(4) CRITERIA FOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING.—Program selection for Federal funding should continue to reflect the nation's 2 traditional research and development priorities: (A) basic, scientific, and technological research that represents investments in the nation's long-term future scientific and technological capacity, for which government has traditionally served as the principle resource; and (B) mission research investments, that is, investments in research that derive from necessary public functions, such as defense, health, education, environmental protection, and raising the standard of living, which may include pre-commercial, precompetitive engineering research and technology development. Additionally, government funding should not compete with or displace the short-term, market-driven, and typically more specific nature of private-sector funding. Government funding should be restricted to pre-competitive activities, leaving competitive activities solely for the private sector. As a rule, the government